

### Bang Chan Canal bisected

the community and joined, about one mile south, Sānseāb Canal, a broad old waterway connecting Bangkok and Minburi with the canal network of the central plains. A well-raised, year-round road which ran between Bangkok, 20 miles to the southwest, and Minburi, two miles east, cut through one side of the area. On it lay Bang Khuat, another community, about eight kilometers from Bang Chan (cf. Kaufman:1960), and a cluster of houses called "Kilō pae", (Kilō 8) both west of Bang Chan and nearer to Bangkok. A shallow canal flanked this road most of the way.

The town of Minburi with district offices, shops, and pharmacists, and a good-sized Muslim population was well-known to most of the residents of Bang Chan. Its middle school drew from the surrounding farming countryside, including Bang Chan, those few pupils whose educational aspirations led them beyond the local elementary school. Minburi had electricity, but no telephone or telegraph facilities.

For nine months of the year, while Bang Chan lay under water, most of the marketing was done through boat-vendors who plied the canals. During the dry months, or for large festivities, people marketed at Minburi, Kilō pae, or in Bangkok.

The Thai government administered Bang Chan through two district offices (amphoe), one located in Minburi, the other in Bangkok, close to Bangkok. The common boundary of their respective districts happened to run through the middle of the community. Seven local head men, each in charge of one of the seven hamlets (muban) into which the entire community was divided reported to one or the other district office. They transmitted instructions from their superiors to the farmers, maintained order mostly by their personal prestige, and kept the village census more or less up to date by recording and reporting marriages, births, and deaths.

At the center of the community was the cherished Buddhist temple with its abbot, monks, and novices, numbering 15 to 50 depending on the season. The elementary public school, occupying one of its buildings,<sup>1</sup> was attended by 300 children aged eight to fifteen, both Buddhist and Muslim. The temple compound was surrounded by a number of houses, including a cafe and stalls for small vendors. A small country mosque (surao) in another hamlet was the religious center for the Muslim minority, some of whose children attended another school just outside the Bang Chan community. The abbot and the imam, the respective local heads of the two religious faiths, were of importance in the community as leaders.

1. A new large school has since been built away from the temple compound.

SUMMARY

A general description is given of conditions in a  
105 Siamese rice village, 1952-54, as they relate to food supply  
26 and food habits. Activities at various seasons of the year  
[220] are described. The heavy work seasons occurred during trans-  
planting and harvest. In the dry season, many ceremonials  
and festivals were held in which food played an important  
role. Such occasions provided opportunity to "make merit"  
and add to one's prestige as did the regular offering of  
food to the priests, throughout the year. The relatively  
large financial obligations undertaken by those sponsoring  
ceremonies was a major factor in the economy of the village.

105 Food was mostly home produced and an important factor  
262 in the standard of living was the number of productive hands  
433 available. Rice was the first essential for any meal. Home  
milled rice was used, even in part, only by a minority of  
households. Fish, fresh or preserved, was the food next in  
importance to rice. Use of flesh foods other than fish was  
probably inhibited by Buddhist tenets which prohibit the tak-  
ing of life, but some poultry, oxen, and other flesh foods  
[235] were used. Nearly all of the families in Bang Chan raised  
[433] chickens, and some raised ducks, but about 3/5 of all eggs  
[244] produced were sold. Every family had some sort of kitchen  
[245] garden, including banana trees and other plants, but spices  
[222] and chili were much more commonly grown than vegetables and  
fruit. Swamp cabbage, the green leafy vegetable used most  
often, grew wild in the canals. A calendar of fresh foods  
commonly used in Bang Chan is presented.

• [443] Cash expenditures for food were small. When canals  
were navigable, boat venders brought produce and during the  
busy work seasons farmers often bought fish as well as the  
usual foods: onions, garlic, limes, coconut, palm sugar and  
small amounts of vegetables.

[434] Many households increased their income by the sale of  
eggs, vegetables gathered from the canal and other items.  
[178] Culture of tilapia and mushrooms, begun during the period of  
study, was undertaken by a considerable number of farmers be-  
tween 1953 and 1955. Both enterprises were apparently regard-  
ed primarily as a supplementary source of cash rather than  
as a means of improving the home food supply, and both  
efforts had been largely if not entirely abandoned by 1957.

105 Preparation of some typical dishes, meal service and  
264 techniques of eating are described. For adults, two meals a  
day were usual, except during the busy work seasons when a  
third meal might be eaten. Menus were similar for all. Two  
observations from records of school children were 1) that  
over 90% of them ate snacks, many of which were bought from  
venders on the school grounds. Sweets and fruit were the

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132 Bangkok. The tropical monsoon climate divides the year into  
three seasons, a hot, wet season from late May to November, a  
cooler, dry season from December to early February, and a hot,  
361 dry season from late February to mid-May. The community,  
scattered over an area of approximately five square miles, was  
161 composed of seven neighboring hamlets. In 1954, the population  
162 was approximately 1700, divided among 336 households. About  
60 per cent of the households were made up of independent fam-  
ilies, parents with unmarried children, with an average family  
[463] size of 5.7 persons. The main occupation of 80 per cent of all  
families was rice farming.

243 The climate together with the overflowing Chao Phraya  
[13] river, provided natural conditions for raising a single crop  
of wet rice. From May or June to February, the principal activ-  
[22] ities were those connected with rice production. This crop  
greatly exceeded the needs for local consumption as human food,  
[43] feed, and seed. The surplus of rice which was sold, was esti-  
mated for 1953 as 1.4 times the amount used for all purposes  
within the village (Janlekha, 1955).

346 Wat Bang Chan, the Buddhist monastery and place for re-  
621 ligious exercises, was also the center of social life in the  
community. When data for this study were being gathered, the  
[795] one primary school in the village was located on the grounds  
of the wat. The community was defined simply by the clientele  
which patronized Wat Bang Chan and this elementary school.  
[563] Within the area of the community lived a small minority of Thai  
Moslems who patronized a mosque and school just outside Bang  
Chan. The few Chinese in the village were considered as part  
of the Thai-Buddhist community. Information to be presented  
[028] on food habits refers primarily to habits of the Buddhist major-  
ity, although some reference will be made to ways in which  
Moslem practices differed therefrom.

133 Although for six or more months of the year the fields  
243 were covered with water, sometimes to a depth of a meter or  
491 more, a year-round road, connecting Bangkok and Minburi, the  
nearest market town, ran through one edge of the village. Bus  
484 service was available along this road, to either Bangkok or  
[494] Minburi but within the community one went by boat on the net-  
work of canals during the wet season, and during the dry season,  
on foot along the dikes or across fields. From late January  
[501] through May, when subsidiary canals were apt to be dry, getting  
about was somewhat difficult. Boat travel was considered easy,  
but as many families had only one boat, a trip to the store or  
even to a neighbor's home had to be planned with reference to  
the activities of other family members.

443 Large scale purchases, as for a ceremony, were always  
made at a big market, but in general, instead of people going  
to the market-town, the "market" came to the people. Boat-  
venders brought not only fresh produce and staples but also  
sweets, ices, soft drinks, and cooked foods such as Chinese

- 443 noodles. Their prices were higher than in Minburi or Bangkok, but their service was such a convenience that many people rarely went to town. Some adults in Bang Chan had never been to Bangkok though almost all had visited Minburi, about 3 miles from the temple. Venders often extended credit, and also accepted items such as fresh fish, fruit, and eggs on a barter basis, thus providing an outlet for small amounts of home products. When the subsidiary canals were dry, however, venders could not get to some parts of the village.

### Home Sites and Houses

#### General Arrangement

- 361 Since the canals provided the chief means of local  
487 transportation for much of the year, and also supplied water for many household uses, houses were built near the canal, usually within sight of a neighbor's. Home sites were mounded up to a level of two or three feet above that of the fields, but even so, water might cover the mound at the peak of the rainy season. Old wooden houses were set in a grove of bamboo, bananas and other fruit trees and vines, occasionally betel and coconut palms. Nearby might be a shed for the water buffalo which were the draught animals used in farming. Rarely one saw a walled privy.<sup>1</sup> On the same mound might be a cottage built by parents for married children or by an affluent farmer for a hired hand. In this case, the threshing floor, firewood from trees on the mound, and area for kitchen garden would be shared. Many houses were built on stilts to avoid flooding when the water level was high. If the house was elevated sufficiently, the area underneath provided a relatively cool shelter during the hot season for the buffalo, and even for family members for some of their daytime activities.

- 352 Depending on the resources of the family, houses were built of either thatch or wood, roofed with thatch, galvanized iron or occasionally, tile. Split bamboo or matting might be used for dividing walls if the house had more than one room. Wooden flooring was usual, but in simpler thatched houses with dirt floors, the buffalo might be sheltered under the same roof with the family. In such a house, one or more low wooden platforms were built for sitting and sleeping. Wide cracks between floor boards conveniently permitted betel  
364 chewers to spit without the need for a spittoon. Those who  
264 were preparing food or clearing up after a meal could also  
364 thus discard refuse or dispose of leftover food that was to be given to chickens, without leaving the kitchen. Some

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1. cf. Hauck, 1956, p. 45-6 for description of latrine facilities.

Seasonal Activities

128 A chart has been prepared to show the climatic conditions in Bang Chan and what people were doing at different seasons (Chart 1). For convenience, the periods covered by the four rounds of the dietary survey (p. 58) are included.

221 The year starts with May, the beginning of the rice-  
132 year. At this time the rains began to soften the parched  
ground, and the heat slackened. School re-opened. Farmers  
241 turned to plowing, harrowing, raising the seedlings. Both  
512 sexes worked about equally in field labor, boys from 14 and  
132 girls from about 15 years of age performing tasks according  
to skill and strength. Everyone was in the field at dawn.  
132 The buffalo, but not the farmer, rested through the noonday  
heat (about 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.) and also on the weekly holy  
241 day. Meals were usually eaten about 10 a.m. and after re-  
turning from the field at dark. Although two meals a day  
were usual at other times, at this season, some had a third  
meal about 2 p.m. If the buffalo were brought home to rest,  
132 this meal could be eaten at home, but hired laborers or those  
working far from home often took with them rice and other  
foods in a (2)pin-(1)too, or tiered lunch kit.

221 With the rains, the canals had filled, so that by June  
132 buyers with big rice boats could return. The few farmers who  
501 could afford to hold onto a portion of their last year's crop  
• 144 sold it for a better price at this time. Vegetables and  
132 fruits which had died in the long drought were replaced, and  
trees were planted.

241 In July the heavy transplanting season began. Because  
221 of cooperative work habits or hiring out, people worked  
132 solidly day after day for two months on their own or on an-  
other's fields. It was dawn-to-dark, back-breaking work.

132 This was an anxious time. The seedlings had to go in  
at exactly the right time. Water level was only partly con-  
trollable. Lack of rain might be remedied by pumping water  
from the canals but flooding would drown the plants. School  
132 vacation was scheduled at this time so both teachers and  
132 children could help. Older children might work in the fields,  
132 while younger ones, from 8 to 13, and the aged took over the  
care of babies and toddlers, fished, cooked, gathered food  
for the family and grass for the buffalo. People knew the  
132 crop was subject to drought and flood, pests of rats and  
worms, destruction by birds or wandering buffalo or duck, and  
in the end to the mysterious fluctuations of the price of  
rice on the world market. Moreover, some persons worried  
about debts, acquired from giving a ceremony or making a  
capital investment and sometimes from heavy gambling during  
the rest season.

221 Despite the availability of fish and of vegetables in  
435 the canal, the highest cash outlays for family food occurred  
in this transplanting season. Several factors probably con-  
tributed to this: increased food energy needs because of  
long hours of work, vendors again accessible because of high  
water, cash from sale of last year's crop still in hand, the  
convenience of cooked foods and snacks, and perhaps the need  
to replenish household supplies after the long drought, or  
after their depletion by a ceremony.

221 The two months of September and October during which  
[512] the rice grew afforded some respite. People slept a little  
longer and breakfast was not prepared so early. The skilled  
cook might take over and could give more attention to food  
preparation. All who could, took the opportunity to visit  
[198] and take trips. A few might go on a pilgrimage. Therefore,  
[260] in this season, all family members were less often together  
at the evening meal. Fishing was a continuous occupation,  
[226] with some preserving and home craft. Jobs such as selling  
[443] food in the market were undertaken for ready cash; houses and  
[350] equipment were built or repaired. Finally the threshing  
floor was prepared.

[512] High water caused time-consuming inconvenience only in  
[131] earth-floored cottages where it was necessary to keep the  
rice stores and chickens dry, move the cook-stove, and either  
build plank walks or cook standing ankle deep in water.

243 By November, the earliest varieties of rice matured.  
221 Those who owned several rice fields could put at least one  
into an early type. Many persons, by then short of rice,  
were glad to be thus tided over. One grandmother divided her  
first harvest among her several long-since-independent  
married children; 2 tangs<sup>1</sup> of milled rice per family, 40 for  
herself.

The heroic labor of harvest occupied December, January,  
and February. Farmers raced against the all-too-fast lower-  
ing of the water in the canals, without which sheaves could  
[460] not be moved and buyers could not come for the paddy. People  
worked all daylight hours in the fields, threshed far into  
[226] the night. At this time also many varieties of fish matured  
and men fished night after night. Just when the convenience  
434 of purchased food was greatest, cash was exhausted. With  
426 rice money in sight, vendors might be generous with credit,  
443 but they could navigate only the larger canals, so were not  
available to many.

000 There was an important psychological difference between

[804] 1. One tang equals 20 liters. Milled rice weighs  
about 16 kg. per tang.

16

256 canal misjudged his needs for milled rice and ran out, he had  
508 to mill his own paddy. Since the main canal was deepened in  
1953, year-round transportation of rice by boat has been possible  
for many more farmers, and this may further decrease the  
consumption of home-milled rice.

256 Of 105 households which had and used a home rice mill,  
251 99 used the polishings for feed but no family in Bang Chan  
256 used them for human food (Goldsen and Ralis, 1957). One farmer,  
256 headman of a hamlet, who lived near the main canal and  
256 the road to Minburi but who used home-milled rice, offered as  
256 the reason that the polishings were good chicken feed, and if  
he took rice to Minburi to be milled, the miller would keep  
the polishings.

114 As reported by Janlekha (1955) consumption of milled  
144 rice in 106 households amounted to about 285 kilograms per  
262 capita per year or 780 grams per person per day. Such "house-  
433 hold consumption" includes "losses to pests and poultry, daily  
gifts to priests, contributions to temples and outlays for  
feasts and rites in undetermined but considerable amounts"  
(Sharp et al., 1953, pp. 265-266).

262 Flesh Foods Other than Fish. - The people of Bang Chan  
251 had a taste and appreciation for flesh food, but the production  
784 and use of meat was certainly inhibited by Buddhist tenets  
which prohibited the taking of life.<sup>1</sup> Killing of poultry,  
fish, etc. was tolerated among the relatively young, but was  
considered unsuitable to the aged who should be preoccupied  
with living virtuously. People felt, however, that the sin of  
[732] taking life was condoned if they offered part of an animal to  
the priests.

Since many villagers were unwilling to slaughter buffaloes  
even when they become aged and useless, such animals were  
commonly kept until they died. Animals which had died of old  
age or disease were not, however, regarded by Thai Buddhists  
in Bang Chan as unfit for human consumption. Usually they  
[732] were cut up and given to the priests. When the buffalo belonging  
[732] to one family (Household 67)<sup>2</sup> participating in the dietary  
survey died, some of the meat was used fresh for curry, much

• [443] 1. Meat such as water buffalo and pork as well as fish  
was sold by vendors. Since meat was relatively expensive and  
was usually used in small amounts with other foods, it was  
offered for sale in chunks which no longer resembled the living  
animal. Seeing such small quantities spared the sensibilities  
of the Buddhists who were thus removed a step from the  
[84] killing. Actual butchering was done by Moslems or Chinese who  
did not object.

[26] 2. Households were identified by numbers assigned by  
lot.

231 was given away fresh to selected kin and friends, including  
242 those who helped to butcher, and the remainder was salted  
253 and dried. Of this, 7 kg. were kept and 5 kg. sold. Moslems  
264 are forbidden to eat an animal with two or four legs which  
275 "dies," although eating dead locusts or fish is not forbidden.  
286 Some Moslems in Bang Chan reported offering dead animals to  
297 Buddhists in barter for other materials.

301 Oxen, a sign of prosperity, were bought as calves by  
312 the Moslems and fattened for meat, usually with a ceremony in  
323 mind. In 1955 (Goldsen and Hallis, 1957) only 5 householders  
334 in Bang Chan raised hogs, and 4 of these had 1 or 2 only.  
345 Moslems ate no pork. A permit from the district officer was  
356 necessary for slaughtering a buffalo or an ox but not for  
367 hogs. Natural deaths of such animals were supposed to be re-  
378 ported.

385 Poultry was not commonly used for food in Bang Chan.  
396 It was the poor man's "feast" food suitable for guests. One  
407 couple in the lowest income level killed one chicken or a  
418 duck once a year to provide the traditionally good meal for  
429 their cooperative harvest helpers. Others, better off, might  
440 serve chicken especially at men's dinners. Pigeons were  
451 raised for sale in the market by one Moslem family. In 1953-  
462 54, one person was trying to raise a few turkeys for sale, as  
473 word had reached Bang Chan that turkeys were in demand for  
484 foreigners' holiday dinners. By 1957 turkey-raising for cash  
495 was spreading, but some villagers objected to having them  
506 around "because they look like vultures and bring misfortune."

514 Various wild creatures were used for food whenever they  
525 were caught. Turtle curry was considered a great delicacy,  
536 but as turtles, which could be caught from May to February,  
547 brought a good price in Bangkok, experts usually sold their  
558 catch. Frogs and turtles were sometimes kept in a jar until  
569 needed. Eels, frogs, cobra and other snakes were used for  
580 curry. Field rats, available all year, were roasted.

586 Fish. - Next to rice, fish constituted the most abun-  
597 dant food in the diet in Bang Chan. Either fresh or pre-  
608 served, they were available throughout the year. Killing

251 1. According to observation in 1952-54, fish caught in  
excess of immediate needs were preserved for later use. Ser-  
pentheads ( (1)plaa (3)chausun), which are about 7 or 8  
inches long, and pilot fish ( (1)plaa (2)sa-(2)lid), about 4  
or 5 inches long, were commonly salted and dried. Heads and  
tails were removed and the fish were split open and salted  
overnight. The following morning the fish were washed and  
spread on fiber trays in the sun to dry. Some excess fish  
might be dried at anytime of year, but larger quantities were  
done during the hot, dry season. The process was usually  
complete within a week.

228 which the leafy vegetable (2)phag (2)ka-(2)cheed is one, and digging a deep hole at its entry. At the proper time the opening was plugged. The fish grew in the pool and were taken as needed, sometimes, for convenience, several at a time, to be kept alive in a large pot near the house. By draining the pond fish were "harvested" (p. 12). Yields varied, but villagers had the impression that they had declined considerably over a period of years.<sup>1</sup> In 1952, at the suggestion of FAO, the Thai government tried to increase the supply by introducing tilapia culture. During the first three years of the experiment about one-third of the families in Bang Chan had tried to raise tilapia, but in the summer of 1957 members of the research group were told that no one had persisted (see Appendix A, p. 101).

235 Eggs. - Chickens were raised by about 90% of the families in Bang Chan, and over 70% owned 10 or more. In contrast, only 37% of the households had ducks, and only 13% had 10 or more (Goldsen and Rallis, 1957, p. 36). Ducks were regarded as trouble makers. Moreover, chickens could feed "naturally" and certainly helped themselves to paddy from the bin, whereas ducks did not eat paddy, but had to be provided with bran and broken rice.

235 Most of the eggs produced were sold. Janlekha (1955)  
433 estimated the annual production of chicken eggs in Bang Chan  
433 as 366,540, and that of duck eggs as 268,200 eggs. According  
262 to the information which Janlekha obtained from 106 households in 1953, about 4/5 of the chicken eggs were sold as a secondary source of farm income whereas more than 3/4 of the duck eggs were home consumed. Slightly over 2/5 of all eggs produced in the village were consumed there. On a per capita basis, the average annual consumption of 708 eggs for an average family size of 5.7 persons (Janlekha, 1955) amounted to a little over 1/3 of an egg per day. Home consumption of eggs might be less in households in which enough chickens were raised to make regular sale of eggs possible. Thus in 5 of the 31 households studied by Sharp et al. (1953, p. 197) all hen's eggs produced were consumed at home.<sup>2</sup> For these families, an average of 452 eggs per family per year or about 1-1/4 egg per family per day, were thus available. Home consumption in the 26 families which sold eggs amounted to an average of 215 per year or about 0.6 egg per family per day. One informant commented that a rich man could eat an egg every day, but she could not afford to do so. She said she sold eggs, when she had them, and bought foods to eat with rice.

1. Sharp et al., 1953, pp. 191-192.

2. This probably means that eggs were not sold in quantity, not that none were used in barter (cf p. 5); thus the number of eggs available may be overestimated.

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262 expenditures by food groups is shown for the 11 families that  
511 participated in the dietary study.

Consumption of canned foods was negligible. Some canned  
fish and fruits were on sale at stores in the village, in 1952-  
54, but were seldom seen in homes.

262 Sweetened condensed milk, which was served in coffee  
272 sold at the stores, was occasionally bought for the children.  
854 On one occasion, a woman was seen buying milk diluted with  
855 hot water as a beverage. Among 526 records of food eaten by  
school children during 24 hour periods, milk appeared twice  
only, once with coffee. Dried milk, for infant feeding, was  
used occasionally. During 1952-54, several instances were  
noted in which dried milk, mixed with water, was used to feed  
an infant while the mother was at work in the field or engaged  
in vending, but we encountered one case only of an infant who  
was not breast fed. This was an infant whose mother died when  
he was five days old, and who was reared by grandparents.

262 Relatively few items of food were available at the vil-  
443 lage stores. In the inventory of the largest of the three  
[272] stores in the village in 1948-49 (Sharp et al., 1953, pp. 211-  
212) the following items of food were listed: big dried  
chilies, shrimp paste, onion, garlic, fish sauce (fishsuy),  
salted fish, fresh chilies, limes, coconut, coconut oil,  
brown (palm)sugar, tea, coffee, condensed milk, orangeade and  
lemonade (carbonated), sweets, liquor, ingredients (including  
a lime paste) used together in betel chewing.

New stock received in December by a local vender who  
kept a few items for sale at her house included mature green  
beans, black beans, peanuts, sweet potatoes, salted turnip,  
pickled garlic and tomato sauce.

272 Larger stores served as informal men's clubs where tea,  
443 coffee with condensed milk, and carbonated beverages were  
575 sold primarily for consumption on the premises. The proprietor  
of a new store, built in December 1952, sold no liquor.

272 We have no estimate of the amount of liquor sold in Bang  
443 Chan, although for those who drank it, its caloric value might  
be of significance.<sup>3</sup> About 9% of the householders interviewed

[354] 1. Listed by Sharp et al. with non-food items, as much  
of it was burned in lamps.

2. Included here as food since some calcium may be ob-  
tained from this source.

3. One observer estimated the intake of certain village  
men who drank regularly as at least 2 oz. of rice liquor (28-  
35% alcohol) per day, representing about 100 calories. The  
estimated intake of women who drank regularly was about 1 oz.  
per day.

273 In 1955 (Goldsen and Ralis, 1957, p. 57) said they drank  
whiskey often, 22% drank occasionally, 47% seldom, and only  
22% said they never drank it.

#### Sale of Home Produced Foods

433 Although a majority of the families in Bang Chan made  
434 most of their cash income by rice farming, sale of other home  
443 produced foods, fish, and food materials such as swamp cab-  
bage and lotus stems which grew wild in the canals was a  
minor but relatively steady source of income for many fami-  
lies. Six of the 11 families that participated in the dietary  
[442] study obtained some income from sale of food<sup>1</sup>. The woman fre-  
quently had major responsibility for these activities. As  
noted by Sharp et al. (1953), a few poor families only, added  
to their income by selling fish.

121 In connection with this study, our concern with sale of  
home produced foods is primarily with the nutritional rather  
than the economic aspects,<sup>2</sup> although the two cannot be com-  
pletely dissociated. Do activities of this sort on the part  
of some families make a greater variety of foods available to  
the villagers as a whole? Are some foods sold for cash which  
from the nutritive standpoint, might well be kept for home  
use? If so, is the cash thus obtained used to purchase other  
foods or non-food items? Is the food purchased as useful,  
from the nutritive standpoint, as that sold? From the stand-  
point of improving the nutritive value of the diet of Bang  
Chan families in general, would more home production of  
fruits, vegetables, fish and eggs by most families be fea-  
sible, or should a few families be encouraged to develop these  
activities on a year round basis, to increase the local supply  
of food other than rice? Questions of this sort must be con-  
sidered by anyone attempting to improve food habits in the  
village.

#### Annual Calendar of Foods Commonly Used

221 From the records extending over the period of a year,  
222 of foods used by various families participating in the dietary  
122 study, and from food records provided by children in the  
123 health classes in December 1952, February, May, June, July,  
124 September, October and November 1953, and January 1954, a  
calendar has been constructed showing the approximate times  
of year at which the foods most commonly used in Bang Chan  
were available (Chart 2). Foods included in this chart were

1. See Table 8, p. 62.
2. See Janlekha (1955).

[Text continues on page 29--Analyst]

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The observer often had  
126 opportunity to make notes on foods eaten by various family  
262 members. Two examples of these are included in Appendix A,  
p. 97.

### Snacks

262 We have noted that various family members ate the morn-  
264 ing meal, in particular, at different times, and that children  
[355] especially might eat leftover food between meals. Most Bang  
Chan school children<sup>1</sup> ate snacks, which were usually different  
• [443] from foods eaten at a regular meal. Doubtless most of them  
were purchased from one of the vendors who were to be seen on  
the school grounds daily. Fruits and "desserts" were most  
commonly eaten, although a variety of other foods, not a part  
of the usual Thai meal, were also listed. Sweets were listed  
about 450 times on the 539 records obtained. Many of them had  
a base of rice, rice flour or glutinous rice with sugar, and  
included coconut, banana or other fruit. Some were made with  
legumes, and a few contained egg. Fried bananas, fried sweet  
potato slices, bananas or beans cooked in syrup, and bananas  
cooked in sweetened coconut milk were also listed. A few  
items such as ices, flavored syrup poured over shaved ice, and  
candies, had little nutrient value other than caloric content.

272 A glass of milk, and milk with coffee, were each listed  
once. These might have been obtained at the store adjoining  
[354] the school grounds. These instances are worth noting primar-  
ily because, although dried and tinned milks were obtainable,  
milk was seldom given to village children after weaning.

262 Many children were given a bit of cash each day, and  
437 Janlekha (1955) commented that some children who did not have  
855 any might barter an egg for snacks. One could tell fairly  
[261] well from the children's records what the vendors offered for  
sale on a given day. Some influence of season was apparent;  
thus ices and syrup over shaved ice were eaten more often dur-  
ing the hot dry season, and cooked foods such as fried Chinese  
noodles appeared primarily in the cool season.

[126] 1. With the cooperation of teachers of the third and  
fourth grades in the Bang Chan elementary school, records of  
food eaten during 24-hour periods were obtained from children  
in these grades at intervals of about one month during the  
school year. This was a regular activity in the health class.  
A total of 539 records (from 1 to 8 for each child) were ob-  
tained from 75 boys and 72 girls. To facilitate recording,  
each child was given a sheet of paper, with spaces for his  
name, the date, and kinds of food other than rice, eaten at  
the morning, noon and evening meals, and as snacks. These  
records were collected primarily for information on meal pat-  
terns of village families for comparison with the limited  
sample in the dietary survey, and on seasonal use of various  
foods.

244  
196 the priests had finished<sup>1</sup>. The trays of food from which each  
196 guest served himself were bountiful, but it was not proper to  
196 eat very heartily, lest the host suffer the shame of running  
196 out of food. If there were a dramatic show or movie at night  
196 it was open to the public. In one case 2000 people attended.  
• [196] At that time eight commercial vendors turned up to sell  
coffee, soft drinks, ices and other foods. Vendors came to  
every large ceremony, and were heavily patronized. At the  
end of a (1)ngaan, the sponsors felt satisfaction and secur-  
ity. Where there was plenty of food to take home, the success  
was even greater. An earthy compliment was, "the fields were  
full of feces."

262 In addition to the banquet were ceremonial offerings of  
196 food to spirits and ritual food sometimes consumed as a  
[196] sacrament. For each ceremony, appropriate selections were  
made from a specific list: a cooked pig's head, or at least  
a slice of cooked pork; two kinds of sweetmeats, red ( (2)kha-  
(5)nom (3)tom (1)deaeeng) and white ( (2)kha-(5)nom (3)tom  
(5)khaaw); a cooked fish, usually (1)plaa (3)chaaun, with  
its head and tail; a green coconut with its coconut water; a  
bunch of bananas either of the (3)kluaaj (4)nam-(4)was or  
(3)kluaaj (4)nam varieties; a hard-boiled egg, usually duck;  
and liquor.<sup>2</sup> Other kinds of sweets, fruit, sugar cane, items  
for betel chewing, chicken, salt, and rice might appear. As  
196 these ceremonies were thought to be auspicious, purifying,  
196 therapeutic and protective, they were most elaborate at the  
196 great (1)tham-(1)khwan (soul-strengthening) ceremony, at  
196 house-raising and at rites to local guardian spirits. The  
196 necessity of these ceremonies explains why when public struc-  
196 tures were raised, a portion of the public funds were used  
000 for a repast. In Bang Chan when donations for a new school

1. Other priorities in service might be observed; for  
example, at a celebration preceding ordination the priest-  
[196] candidates were served next. At one small affair, when 11  
196 priests came to a home to conduct a service for a disabled  
196 old man who could not go to the temple, this elder was  
196 served after the priests, then the research group who counted  
as visiting dignitaries, and finally the other family members,  
with the women who prepared the food, and the children, eat-  
ing last. The general sequence prescribed by etiquette was:  
priests should be served before anyone else, old before the  
young, the males before females, persons with high status  
such as teachers and ceremonialists before low, urban before  
rural. Those who cooked and served came last of all. When  
the number of participants was large, guests might be served,  
as they arrived, over a period of hours.

2. The presence of meat, fish and alcohol in this  
ceremonial food reflected non-Buddhist elements in Thai  
culture, and should not be viewed as a gross violation of  
Buddhist precepts.

435 Some information as to the cost in baht of the larger  
196 ceremonies held in 1954, and their scale, was obtained from  
[124] the school teacher's diary. Examples follow:

[792] Ordination: Total cost 8,000, including food 1400,  
liquor 800. Guests contributed 4000.

[852] Top-knot tonsure: Total cost 1550, including new  
utensils 550; 6 priests fed; each priest  
given 12 baht; 12 (2) pin-(1) toos filled to  
take to the temple; 100 duck eggs donated,  
and 300 baht received from 30-40 guests.

[714] Cremation<sup>1</sup>: Total cost 40,000<sup>2</sup>, including about 10,000  
for food; 61 priests fed<sup>3</sup>. About 500  
guests contributed 4377.

[875] Homage-to-the-teacher ritual:  
A: Total cost 715, including food 565 and  
liquor 150; 40 tang (800 liters) fish and  
3 tang Chinese noodles donated.  
B: Total cost, 11,000<sup>4</sup>.

[585] Wedding: A: Thai Buddhist: Total cost 5000.  
Guests gave 2300.

[583] B: Rite of forgiveness after elopement:  
a meal, with 5 bottles of liquor.

[184] C: Moslem: 2 buffalo slaughtered.  
400 guests.

585 Arranged marriages could be large merit-making affairs,  
262 with a huge procession from one house to the other of twenty-  
four "pairs" of specified foods, i.e. two bearers each of  
sugar cane, fruits, sweetmeats and other things. At more  
[583] modest weddings and the rite of forgiveness for a couple who  
had eloped, food might differ from the usual fare only by in-  
cluding the three essentials of a wedding: pork, chicken and  
alcohol.

273 Increased consumption of alcoholic beverages during the  
196 ceremonial season was indicated by the sales of one local

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1. Cremation was the last of several rites at death.  
Private 7-day, 30-day and 100-day rites were held, when  
priests came to the home to chant and to be feasted.

2. With cooperative assistance from well-situated  
relatives in Bangkok.

3. The whole chapter of priests from Wat Bang Chan  
[792] was always included at cremations, and often others from a  
[574] distance.

4. See list of food purchased, Appendix A, pp. 102-103.

- 443 storekeeper: about 800-900 liter bottles per month during  
273 the 3 months dry season as compared to about 350 bottles per  
796 month during the 9 months of the rice season.

184 Moslems never served liquor at their weddings, crema-  
[273] tions, and other auspicious events. Moslem residents occa-  
sionally attended Buddhist (l)ngaan in spite of dietary pro-  
[262] scriptions that Buddhists did not observe.<sup>1</sup> A medium (spirit-  
ualist) commented however that because pig's head was essen-  
tial for her homage-to-the-teacher rites, some Moslem sick  
persons preferred to go to the Buddhist temple for treatment.  
There the priest-practitioner could afford to set up a separate  
kitchen for his Moslem patients, and so spare them the dis-  
tress of confronting pork. To one big ordination Moslem  
guests brought their own food. Buddhists came somewhat more  
often to Moslem ceremonies.

262 We do not have enough information to appraise the nutri-  
574 tional significance of food eaten at ceremonies. Some indi-  
476 viduals got a great deal of it, others very little. One must  
264 remember that the (l)ngaan was not a public but a private  
event at home, to which guests came on invitation. Although  
cremations and the teacher-rites of priest-practitioners were  
held at the temple, and so had a semi-public character, no one  
who was not invited presented himself for food. Of the par-  
ticipants, the working group undoubtedly received the most  
food; they were there the longest time, had regular meals,  
tastings and snacks throughout the (l)ngaan meal itself. This  
group comprised the host, co-sponsors and their immediate kin;  
other relatives and friends who were asked or who volunteered  
to help. The feeling was, if one were "very fond" of the  
host, one volunteered to cook. If less close, one was invited  
as a guest, but made the usual cash donation. Sociable per-  
sons combining skill and energy were invited often and volun-  
[551] teered often, hence spent many days at ceremonies. Young un-  
married men and women were asked and liked to be asked to  
work, for such occasions offered a great chance for fun and  
flirting.

114 Different degrees of participation may be estimated  
476 from Janlekha's (1955) figures for reported contributions  
796 ranging from 30 to 1000 baht in a year. Since a contribution  
of 5 to 10 baht per (l)ngaan was customary, the villager with  
the lowest reported contribution probably attended from 3 to  
6 ceremonial occasions. Attendance at 100 or more (l)ngaan  
is unlikely, hence the villager who gave as much as 1000 baht  
probably made larger contributions per (l)ngaan.

574 What sort of persons or groups in the village were in-  
796 vited as guests? Every host's list included his older

[702] 1. Moslems were said to resist army service because  
they were afraid they would have to eat pork.

125 fishing and selling vegetables, they managed to obtain a fair  
532 diet. The father's skill as a masseur was valued especially  
511 at periods of heavy farm work, after childbirth, and by the  
434 cooks at a ceremonial feast. This brought in from 2 to 12  
463 baht per week.

[262] In Group A, Families 67 and 103 were at the most difficult period of life, with young, dependent children, and housing, land and equipment to be acquired. By great industry, including egg production from a flock of 60 chickens, and by severe "belt-tightening," Household 103 was lifting itself into a propertied position. The parents in Household [57] 67 were shy. One or the other of the two older children [57] often stayed home from school to look after the baby, so [124] that both parents could work. Husband and wife in Household 12 were both very shy, the only ones in the survey group who were at all reluctant to participate. They seemed ashamed [152] of limited food. The wife was frequently ill. In Household [111] 222, the 14-year old daughter often gathered and sold vegetables at Minburi before school in the morning. She might [158] have full charge of the younger children for days at a time. A daughter who worked as a servant in Bangkok contributed 50 baht per month to this household. In Household 215, the [465] activities of the wife as medium were predominant. Pay included food, often cooked, and the free use of 3½ rai of land, as well as cash. Maintenance of a son in school in [435] Bangkok cost about 1000 baht per year plus 60 tang of rice. [371] In Household 2, the elderly wife's services as "boss-buyer and cook" at ceremonials, and as marriage go-between did not bring in cash, but gifts, clothing and much participation in feasts.

491 All families in the survey group were Thai Buddhists,  
262 and 6 of them offered food to priests more or less regularly.  
792 On 17 of the 24 survey days when the observer visited these  
[779] households, food was offered. Two of the 5 families that did not customarily give food to priests, did so on one and two survey days, respectively. In one case food was offered to a son who had been recently ordained. Rice was always included in the food offered, and in 3 of the 20 instances observed rice only was given. The weight of cooked rice given by one family in one day ranged from 185 to 1210 grams, with an average of about 600 grams. In 16 instances, some cooked food such as fish or vegetable curry was given with the rice; in one instance fresh pineapple was given.

511 Cash Expenditures for Food. - Mean total, and per  
[128] capita daily cash expenditures for food for survey days, are shown, by household in Table 8. (See Table 2, p. 23 for division of food expenditures for Groups A,B) Although cash expenditures for food varied considerably, the amounts in all cases were small, and approximated figures obtained by Janlekha (1955) for 106 households. Larger consumption of animal products, which were the most expensive items purchased,

146 For items used less frequently, the figures are correspond-  
262 ingly less than the usual amount eaten. Thus, sweet potato, which is represented as 18 grams per day per person in Group A, actually appeared on 3 records only. One family of 8 persons ate 1200 grams of sweet potato at one meal and a substantial amount later the same day. Most items appear on the lists for both groups, but sweet potato, sweet basil and bananas were included on the list for Group A only, and glutinous rice which is used as a sweet in this area, appears on the list for Group B only. Note that a few common foods account for most of the nutrients in the diets of both groups. These common foods account for only about 80% of the calcium and vitamin A value and slightly less of the ascorbic acid in the diets of Group A. The list for Group B accounts for about 70% of the calcium and 60% of the ascorbic acid in the diets of this group. The variety of green leaves used once or twice only on survey days by Group B, and the number of different seasonal fruits used by both groups in small amounts as snacks, probably account for this.

264 Contribution of Snacks to the Nutrient Content of Diets. -  
[355] On the average, 4 out of 5 children had one snack per day,  
262 whereas only one adult in 6 did so. The following items appeared most commonly: various kinds of fruit, 40 times (orange 7, banana 6, pineapple, watermelon and mango each 5 times, guava, jujube and Manila tamarind each 2 times, olives, rambutan, rambai, star gooseberry, (2)ta-(1)koo and Thai nutmeg each once, coconut and bread each 13 times, glutinous rice 8, mung bean 7, truffles 6, products made of rice flour 6 times, and a variety of other items including rice noodles, sweet potato, taro, bean sprouts, lotus stalks, lotus seeds, popcorn, products made of cassava flour, sugar cane, pork and milk from 1 to 4 times each. Salt, and/or palm sugar were [446] eaten with a number of the snacks. Although they contributed only about 2% of the total calories, and from 1 to 3% of most nutrients, snacks contributed 16% of the total ascorbic acid for Group A and 11% for Group B.

Seasonal Variation in Food Preparation, Meal Patterns, Food Costs and Calorie and Nutrient Value of Foods Eaten

128 In Table 14, a summary including the number of meals  
252 prepared, time spent in meal preparation, number of "with-  
264 rice" dishes, and cash expenditures for food is given by  
[435] rounds, for families in each group.

252 Number of Meals Prepared. - Food was cooked twice on  
512 each survey day in 3 of 6 households in Group A and 3 of 5 households in Group B. Heavy farm work or vending which kept the mother away from the house sometimes accounted for once-a-day food preparation. One housewife who took food to market in Bangkok, cooked food twice a day only during the period shortly before the birth of a child, when she was not vending.

[Text continues on page 79---Analyst]

arbitrary, were it not for the Buddhist temples, a neighboring government-operated primary school, and a few small stores, all of which provide a center for the community. There the inhabitants paddle their boats for religious observances, their children attend school, and anyone with a few minutes gossips over a cup of coffee. These people, furthermore, speak of themselves when outside the community as coming from Bang Chan, and the temple familiarly called "Wat Bang Chan" helps outsiders to identify the particular area.

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The community's 1600 inhabitants live in one of seven hamlets, each with an officiating headman who may offer some leadership to the neighborhood. Bang Chan has no political unity beyond the informal influence of the head priest at the temple, for administrative units of local government disregard its social and psychological coherence. On one side of the main canal headmen go a rough two miles to attend meetings with the District Officer, while their neighbors across the canal must spend half a day on the canal to reach the district offices which govern them.

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As the survey results indicate, about 88 per cent of the households receive the major portion of their income from cultivating rice, though many of these men and women turn briefly to other occupations during the slack season. The remaining fraction is divided between persons engaged in trade as storekeepers or vendors and those in such service occupations as highway labor or school janitor.

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A little less than half of the population owns the land or a portion of the land it works, the remainder renting from neighbors and landholders living away from Bang Chan. Though land becomes scarcer every year and its subdivision into small plots finer, land problems and landlord problems are not important concerns of the area farmers. Economic factors also grant higher status within the community to land holders than to renters and the landless. Sp also age and religious piety bring respect. Yet social structure articulates flexibly enough to afford a young renter of good reputation and energy a decent hearing at a meeting, and indeed, he might carry his point in a group of wealthy landholders. Two or three times in past generations young men have moved from thatched houses in Bang Chan to high government positions in Bangkok through fortunate connections that enabled them to attend leading schools, as well as through their own industry. People more or less invoke the Buddhist concept of accumulating merit in present and past lives through good deeds when they comment on the rise of such persons, for with sufficient merit all is possible. Thus regularity in the socio-economic order becomes a moderate level of probability admitting many exceptions.

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[555]  
[771]

Contacts Outside the Community

Radio and movies provide indirect contact between the community and the outside world and seem to encourage the acceptance of urban behavior patterns. (See Table 16.) In addition, however, there is direct contact between the community and the capital city. The inhabitants commute to Bangkok to sell their products or to visit. Some go to the city to live for a time, to attend the city's schools, to work as laborers or to serve in the military or police force. For example, about a quarter of the sample (26 per cent) reported that during the year preceding the survey they had been to Bangkok ten or more times. About a third of the sample (35 per cent) have lived in Bangkok, mostly for the purpose of working there. On the other hand, almost half the sample (45 per cent) have never been to the Don Muang Airport; and over two-thirds (69 per cent) have never been to the Annual Agricultural Fair.

One would expect that such direct exposure to the urban life and values of the capital city, for example, might be linked with greater readiness to try out improved methods of agriculture either because exposure to urban life may mean exposure to more information, or, less directly, may mean exposure to the urban values of economic self-advancement and experimentation. And there is, indeed, a relationship between exposure to the capital city and use of the motor. The two factors are not linked for all the residents--the relationship is a conditional one. That is, it is mainly among illiterate farmers where urban contact is associated with readier acceptance of the motor.

TABLE 19. ILLITERATE FARMERS\* WHO HAVE GREATER CONTACT WITH THE CITY ARE MORE LIKELY THAN OTHERS TO USE THE MOTOR

"This past year, how many times did you go to Bangkok...?"

| <u>Literacy</u> | <u>Never or once</u> <u>Twice or more</u> |          |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------|----------|
|                 | (Proportion who own or use the motor)     |          |
| Illiterate      | 44% (40)                                  | 58% (51) |
| Literate        | 83 (36)                                   | 88 (83)  |

\* Male farmers only

In the same way, there is a similar conditional link between use of the motor and wider contacts beyond the horizons of Bang Chan. Visits to the airport and to the agricultural fair, for example, (both centers of contact with urban culture) are associated with use of the motor among illiterate farmers. If the farmer can read and write, on the other hand, he is just

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was slightly higher than that of chickens, averaging 155 eggs per laying duck.

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Hogs: In 1949, two families were raising hogs which according to our observation did not seem to be well fed. When we returned to the village in 1952, not a single hog remained in Bangchan.

Fish

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After rice, fish (and other marine animals) are by far the most important ingredient in the diet of Bangchan. More fish are bought from the outside than the very small amount that is exported from the village mainly by one or two very poor families who have availed themselves of this means of augmenting their income.

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The villagers' annual cycle for fish-taking varies somewhat with the particular method used, and with the annual rice and ceremonial cycles: yet the maturation cycle of the principal types of fish is also a factor, and one which tends to give an overall orderliness to the annual cycle for fish in general. There is no time in the year when at least some fish are not available, nor is there any time in the year, even the busiest, when the family does not want fresh fish for its menu. For this reason, there is fishing the year round, at least in the form of the housewives simply setting nets in the canal and then tending them according to some schedule or whenever the noise of caught fish sloshing about in the water is heard. When a lull from the pressure of

178 novice; there were noticeable increases in those for farm  
463 laborers and traders, and a slight increase in that for  
621 investors, which were offset by a marked decrease in figures  
for farm operators and slight drops in those for the profes-  
sional and home enterprisers. In order to understand these  
changes in the occupational structure of the village, more  
information on some of these occupation than that given in  
our operational definitions at the beginning of this chapter  
is necessary.

\*243 Farm operation is a traditional way of life in the  
434 village. The primary motive is to secure enough rice for  
463 consumption. A secondary motive is to have cash from sale  
of surplus rice to buy goods that are not produced locally.

\*243 Farm laboring as a profession is limited to the poor.  
464 Farm laborers, occupying the lowest status in the village,  
554 are the most unstable and socially disintegrated group.  
621 They are not fully employed even during the work seasons  
463 of the year because there are too many of them in the local-  
ity. Thus, they exist in the village not because of demand  
for their work but because they have no opportunity for  
other occupations.

621 There were twenty-one families that were classified  
463 as traders in 1953. Of these, nine were permanent store-  
• 443 keepers, and twelve were peddlers selling food stuffs from  
door to door. Stores were situated at strategic places in  
the village -- two at the crossing of Minburi Road and  
Bangchan Canal which is the natural entrance into the village,

62/ four in the immediate neighborhood of the temple or on the  
463 temple ground itself, and three on the banks of up-canal  
• 443 Bangchan. These stores varied in the size of business but  
the goods sold were almost identical. To be found in each  
store were inexpensive articles of daily use, mostly dry  
foods, cookies, tobacco, betel, areca, lime, toilet articles,  
matches, kerosene, and farm materials like ropes. Most of  
these stores also sold hot coffee, soft drinks, and liquor.  
It should be noted in this connection that the market town  
is only two miles away. This nearness to a large market  
adversely affects the nature and volume of business of local  
traders in two ways -- villagers bypass local stores and go  
to the market town for varieties and large purchase, and the  
village is daily invaded by a number of peddlers from the  
town selling perishable foods.

443 While local stores operated the whole year round, the  
463 activities of twelve other trader families classified as  
peddlers were highly seasonal subject to local water condi-  
tion, seasonal demand for purchased food, seasonal supply  
of cash, and alternative income on the part of the peddlers  
themselves. These peddlers sold small quantities of vege-  
tables, fruit, and the cheap salt water platoo fish (Rastrel-  
liker chrysozonus), receiving in exchange from buyers cash,  
[426] eggs, or paddy. Extension of credit was necessary for vil-  
lagers did not have cash especially during the period from  
July to November. The following passages in the author's  
daily note dated January 12, 1953 gives an idea as to how

- 443 peddling was conducted by a local resident of Bangchan.

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43 With a capital of 600 baht Nang A began to engage in peddling on December 4, 1952. The first day she spent 150 baht on goods, mostly vegetables which she bought from Minburi. She made two rounds that day. At the end of the morning round she got 25 baht cash and 150 baht on credit. The rest of the vegetables were sold out in the afternoon round in which she received 3.50 baht cash and 29 baht on credit. This was the only time she bought goods from Minburi. From then on she took the 5 a.m. bus to Bangkok and returned to Bangchan with the goods about noon.

"Later she also dealt in pork, and her daily outlay rose to 220 baht. Out of this, she received 150 baht cash and 150 baht on credit. To date her credit accounts total 750 baht. Yesterday she was able to collect 150 baht cash and six tang of paddy (worth 54 baht) from her debtors. She said she expected to do the peddling for fifteen more days, after which the water level would be too low. She would then quit and start the same business next rice year, but she intended to start as early as the transplanting season (August-September).

"She took 200-300 chicken eggs to Bangkok every day. She sold these at a wholesale price of 55 satang each. Sometimes she sold them direct to Bangkok coffee shops and got a higher price of 65 satang a piece. 'If you are a peddler,' 443 she said, 'you must also deal in eggs.' She took time off today because 'shrimps are plentiful' in the canal. Besides,

- 443 she wanted to spend more time collecting debts."

221 It should be noted that A's brief duration of peddl-  
433 ing started in the harvesting season. During this time the  
434 village cash supply was high, resulting in demand for such  
443 a delicacy as pork which normally constituted a negligible  
261 fraction of the diet of Bangchan people. This is a good  
262 business period for the peddlers. Another good business  
period, although not as good as the harvesting time, is in  
the transplanting season, when farmers are too busy to pro-  
cure their own food (by fishing). In this latter period,  
farmers are not particular about food, and "anything eatable  
sells, provided liberal credit is allowed" for people have  
neither time nor money.

443 It should be noted also that many smaller peddlers  
did not go to Bangkok as did Nang A. The small peddlers,  
who operated on a very limited working capital, had to sell  
their eggs to larger peddlers at discounted prices. Our  
records show that only three or four peddlers took regular  
trips to Bangkok.

427 Five families were classified as investors in 1953.  
434 All these families lived on rents from land, interest on  
454 loans, and income from speculative sources such as buying  
621 paddy when the price was low and selling it at high prices.  
463 Actually, most of these five families were not among large  
426 land owners in the village. Their combined land was only  
134 rai, averaging only 27 rai per family and ranging from  
10 to 76 rai. This is a small acreage in comparison to

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1949-53, in actuality public service as an occupation is increasing in Bangchan.

There were four home enterprisers in 1949, mostly engaged in making cookies. As in case of the professional, this activity still existed in Bangchan, but by 1953 it had degenerated into a secondary income, leaving the lone case of basket making in the home enterprise category.

Only one family head was classified in 1953 as a home-enterpriser. The family was engaged in making takraw -- a cane utensil used in picking mangoes from the tree. On January 27, 1953 we met A, the head of this family, who was taking 103 takraws of various sizes to sell in Bangkok.

[435] A gave the amounts and prices of these takraws as follows: 56 large size, @ 3.00 baht; 31 medium size, @ 2.50 baht; 16 small size, @ 2.00 baht. A said he and his wife worked on these 103 takraws alone, and finished them in twelve days, using 50 baht worth of materials including cane, wood, and binders. Ordinarily, they started making takraws in December and continued through May. They were able to make about 3,000 baht within this period. They also made other things like baskets, but takraws were their main source of income. In rice growing season, they also did some piece working. They did not operate a farm. Piece working and basketry during rice growing season brought them a combined income of about 2,000 baht. The amount of each kind of basketry they made was not as constant as takraws. It depended more on which paid best. Their total annual income

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427 landlord-operators were more sensitive to the change in  
435 rent rates than were the other groups of farm operators.

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Limited opportunity for an alternative occupation was mentioned in the preceding paragraph as one of the factors contributing to the inelastic nature of demand for working land. It was also mentioned in the section on the occupational structure of Bangchan that farm laboring families as existing in the village were indigenous and were an outgrowth of competition for land coupled with the reluctance to emigrate on the part of those who failed to rent  
• [443] in any land. Limited opportunity for an alternative occupation in the village was also suggested in the same section when it was mentioned that the only possible alternative -- petty trading which was actually taken up by some former farm operators -- was limited by the fact that villagers bypassed local traders and went to the nearby market town of Minburi for major purchases and variety goods.

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Limited opportunity for an alternative occupation outside the village, however, needs elaboration. It cannot be denied that wages in Bangkok, only twenty miles away and easily accessible through good road and bus services, were higher on the average than corresponding returns for labor in the village. It is important to note, however, that what will attract a villager to seek a job in Bangkok is not a higher average wage level in the city but a higher marginal wage there. Regarding the marginal wage, it is highly doubtful that a better condition exists in Bangkok.